

### 1.501-3

(c) A minimum of 30 days and, normally, at least 60 days will be given for the receipt of comments.

#### 1.501-3 Exceptions.

(a) Comments need not be solicited when the proposed coverage does not constitute a significant revision.

(b) Advance comments need not be solicited when urgent and compelling circumstances make solicitation of comments impracticable prior to the effective date of the coverage, such as when a new statute must be implemented in a relatively short period of time. In such case, the coverage shall be issued on a temporary basis and shall provide for at least a 30 day public comment period.

#### 1.502 Unsolicited proposed revisions.

Consideration shall also be given to unsolicited recommendations for revisions that have been submitted in writing with sufficient data and rationale to permit their evaluation.

#### 1.503 Public meetings.

Public meetings may be appropriate when a decision to adopt, amend, or delete coverage is likely to benefit from significant additional views and discussion.

## Subpart 1.6—Career Development, Contracting Authority, and Responsibilities

### 1.601 General.

(a) Unless specifically prohibited by another provision of law, authority and responsibility to contract for authorized supplies and services are vested in the agency head. The agency head may establish contracting activities and delegate broad authority to manage the agency's contracting functions to heads of such contracting activities. Contracts may be entered into and signed on behalf of the Government only by contracting officers. In some agencies, a relatively small number of high level officials are designated contracting officers solely by virtue of their positions. Contracting officers below the level of a head of a contracting activity shall be selected and appointed under 1.603.

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(b) Agency heads may mutually agree to—

(1) Assign contracting functions and responsibilities from one agency to another; and

(2) Create joint or combined offices to exercise acquisition functions and responsibilities.

[60 FR 49721, Sept. 26, 1995]

### 1.602 Contracting officers.

#### 1.602-1 Authority.

(a) Contracting officers have authority to enter into, administer, or terminate contracts and make related determinations and findings. Contracting officers may bind the Government only to the extent of the authority delegated to them. Contracting officers shall receive from the appointing authority (see 1.603-1) clear instructions in writing regarding the limits of their authority. Information on the limits of the contracting officers' authority shall be readily available to the public and agency personnel.

(b) No contract shall be entered into unless the contracting officer ensures that all requirements of law, executive orders, regulations, and all other applicable procedures, including clearances and approvals, have been met.

#### 1.602-2 Responsibilities.

Contracting officers are responsible for ensuring performance of all necessary actions for effective contracting, ensuring compliance with the terms of the contract, and safeguarding the interests of the United States in its contractual relationships. In order to perform these responsibilities, contracting officers should be allowed wide latitude to exercise business judgment. Contracting officers shall—

(a) Ensure that the requirements of 1.602-1(b) have been met, and that sufficient funds are available for obligation;

(b) Ensure that contractors receive impartial, fair, and equitable treatment;

(c) Request and consider the advice of specialists in audit, law, engineering, information security, transportation, and other fields, as appropriate; and

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(d) Designate and authorize, in writing and in accordance with agency procedures, a contracting officer's representative (COR) on all contracts and orders other than those that are firm-fixed price, and for firm-fixed-price contracts and orders as appropriate, unless the contracting officer retains and executes the COR duties. See 7.104(e). A COR—

(1) Shall be a Government employee, unless otherwise authorized in agency regulations;

(2) Shall be certified and maintain certification in accordance with the current Office of Management and Budget memorandum on the Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer Representatives (FAC-COR) guidance, or for DoD, in accordance with the current applicable DoD policy guidance;

(3) Shall be qualified by training and experience commensurate with the responsibilities to be delegated in accordance with agency procedures;

(4) May not be delegated responsibility to perform functions that have been delegated under 42.202 to a contract administration office, but may be assigned some duties at 42.302 by the contracting officer;

(5) Has no authority to make any commitments or changes that affect price, quality, quantity, delivery, or other terms and conditions of the contract nor in any way direct the contractor or its subcontractors to operate in conflict with the contract terms and conditions;

(6) Shall be nominated either by the requiring activity or in accordance with agency procedures; and

(7) Shall be designated in writing, with copies furnished to the contractor and the contract administration office—

(i) Specifying the extent of the COR's authority to act on behalf of the contracting officer;

(ii) Identifying the limitations on the COR's authority;

(iii) Specifying the period covered by the designation;

(iv) Stating the authority is not re-delegable; and

(v) Stating that the COR may be personally liable for unauthorized acts.

[48 FR 42103, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 70 FR 57451, Sept. 30, 2005; 76 FR 14545, Mar. 16, 2011; 77 FR 12926, Mar. 2, 2012; 78 FR 37676, June 21, 2013]

### 1.602-3 Ratification of unauthorized commitments.

#### (a) Definitions.

*Ratification*, as used in this subsection, means the act of approving an unauthorized commitment by an official who has the authority to do so.

*Unauthorized commitment*, as used in this subsection, means an agreement that is not binding solely because the Government representative who made it lacked the authority to enter into that agreement on behalf of the Government.

(b) *Policy*. (1) Agencies should take positive action to preclude, to the maximum extent possible, the need for ratification actions. Although procedures are provided in this section for use in those cases where the ratification of an unauthorized commitment is necessary, these procedures may not be used in a manner that encourages such commitments being made by Government personnel.

(2) Subject to the limitations in paragraph (c) of this subsection, the head of the contracting activity, unless a higher level official is designated by the agency, may ratify an unauthorized commitment.

(3) The ratification authority in subparagraph (b)(2) of this subsection may be delegated in accordance with agency procedures, but in no case shall the authority be delegated below the level of chief of the contracting office.

(4) Agencies should process unauthorized commitments using the ratification authority of this subsection instead of referring such actions to the Government Accountability Office for resolution. (See 1.602-3(d).)

(5) Unauthorized commitments that would involve claims subject to resolution under 41 U.S.C. chapter 71, Contract Disputes, should be processed in accordance with subpart 33.2, Disputes and Appeals.

(c) *Limitations*. The authority in subparagraph (b)(2) of this subsection may be exercised only when—